

with elements of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force. For the most part, those exercises were conducted in the Hawaiian Islands.

On 3 July, *Alamo* concluded her visit to Hawaii and resumed the voyage to the Orient. En route, further troubles surfaced in the boilers of her main propulsion plant so that, upon her arrival in Subic Bay on 20 July, she commenced another round of repairs. The dock landing ship carried out post-repair trials during the last week in August and finally departed Subic Bay on the 24th. *Alamo* reached Buckner Bay, Okinawa, on 27 August and began embarking marines for transportation to Japan. Between 28 August and 16 September, the amphibious warship made two round-trip voyages between Okinawa and Japan carrying marines to and from training exercises. On 18 September, she stood out of Buckner Bay on her way to Inchon, Korea. During the period 18 September to 13 October, she made three round-trip voyages between Okinawa and South Korean ports. Upon her return to Okinawa from the third of those assignments, a problem with her sterngate tied her up with repairs until 2 November. At that time she headed back to Korea to participate in the bilateral exercise Operation "Valiant Blitz 85-1" in cooperation with elements of the South Korean Navy and Marine Corps. Following stops at Buckner Bay and Sasebo, Japan, *Alamo* began the voyage back to the United States at the end of the third week in November. The dock landing ship made the usual call at Pearl Harbor and then reentered San Diego on 6 December.

Post-deployment standdown and holiday routine occupied her time for the rest of 1984 and during the first two weeks of January 1985. *Alamo* resumed local operations out of her home port late in January. The amphibious warship spent the whole of 1985 conducting exercises, trials, examinations, and inspections either in port in San Diego or in waters adjacent to the west coast. The only break in that schedule came in October when she made a round-trip voyage from the west coast to Hawaii and back for refresher training.

At the beginning of 1986, preparations for her upcoming tour of duty with the 7th Fleet occupied the energies of *Alamo's* crew. She embarked upon the voyage west on 16 January 1986 and made no stops along the way. The danger of violence during elections in the Philippines even prompted the cancellation of planned exercises at Iwo Jima in order that *Alamo* and other Navy ships be on station near Manila to render assistance to United States citizens in that eventuality. The threat never really materialized, and she entered Subic Bay on 9 February. Ten days later, the dock landing ship set sail for Hong Kong where she spent the five days from 21 to 26 February. Returning to Subic Bay briefly at the end of the month, *Alamo* then headed for Okinawa on 2 March. At Okinawa, she embarked troops for a major bilateral amphibious exercise conducted on the South Korean coast. *Alamo* returned to Okinawa on 1 April but stayed only until the 4th when she got underway for Japan. Following a nine-day call at Sasebo, the dock landing ship returned to Subic Bay on 20 April. From there, she voyaged to Singapore by way of the Indonesian island of Bali. Back in the Philippines by mid-May, *Alamo* carried out exercises there for the remainder of the month. On 10 June, she headed back to Okinawa. *Alamo* arrived at her destination on the 13th and spent the next 10 days conducting amphibious exercises at Okinawa.

On 23 June, the dock landing ship put to sea for the passage home. After brief pauses at Iwo Jima and Pearl Harbor, the amphibious warship dropped anchor at Del Mar, Calif., on 15 July. She moved to San Diego on the 16th and commenced post-deployment standdown. The leave and upkeep period ended during the second week in August, and *Alamo* started another schedule of amphibious warfare training in waters along the west coast. Those evolutions lasted until 14 October at which time she began a restricted availability at pierside in San Diego. She remained there through the end of 1986.

Alamogordo

A city in southern New Mexico about 100 miles north-northeast of El Paso, Tex. Alamogordo is the seat of government for Otero County. Nearby Holloman Air Force Base, then known as Alamogordo Air Base, was the site of the first man-induced atomic explosion on 16 July 1945.

(ARD-26: dp. 5,200; l. 491'8"; b. 81'0"; dr. 5'8" (l.); cpl. 120; cl. ARD-12)

ARD-26—a non-self-propelled floating dry dock completed in 1944 at Oakland, Calif., by the Pacific Bridge Co.—was commissioned on 15 June 1944, Lt. Comdr. Irving B. Smith, USN (Ret.), in command. The drydock completed outfitting at Oakland and training at Tiburon, Calif., between mid-June and late August. On 3 September, she was taken in tow for the voyage west. En route to the Marianas, the dry dock made layovers of ten and seven days respectively at Pearl Harbor and Eniwetok. She arrived at Guam on 24 October and reported for duty with Service Squadron (ServRon) 11. Not long thereafter, however, she was assigned temporarily to ServRon 10.

During her more than eight months at Guam, ARD-26 repaired warships damaged in the Leyte, Luzon, and Okinawa campaigns. While carrying out that mission, she reported to several different organizational entities, including ServRon 12, ServRon 10, and the Naval Operating Base (NOB), Guam. In the second week in July 1945, the floating dry dock was towed to the Ryukyus where she transported equipment between various locations around Okinawa and docked warships for repairs. Her duty at Okinawa lasted until mid-August at which time she headed back to the Marianas. ARD-26 resumed her repair duties at Guam on 22 August 1945 and remained so employed for the next 17 years. In the latter part of 1962, the dry dock was towed back to the west coast of the United States. She was placed out of service in October 1962 and was berthed with the San Diego Group, Pacific Reserve Fleet.

ARD-26 did not remain inactive for long. Towed to the east coast in 1964, she underwent conversion to a medium auxiliary repair dry dock at Baltimore by the Bethlehem Steel Corp. ARD-26 was named *Alamogordo* on 22 March 1965 and simultaneously redesignated ARDM-2. She was placed in service again on 3 August 1965. *Alamogordo* then moved south to Charleston, S.C., where she became a support unit for Submarine Squadron (SubRon) 18. She has continued to provide repair services to the boats of SubRon 18 at Charleston for more than two decades. As of the beginning of 1986, she was still active at Charleston.

Alamosa

A town in Conejos County, Colo.

(AK-156: dp. 7,450; l. 338'6"; b. 50'; dr. 21'; s. 11.5 k.; cpl. 79; a. 1 3", 6 20mm.; cl. *Alamosa*; T. C1-M-AV1)

Alamosa (AK-156) was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 2101) on 15 November 1943 at Richmond, Calif., by Kaiser Cargo, Inc.; launched on 14 April 1944; sponsored by Mrs. J. J. Mullane; and acquired by the Navy and commissioned on 10 August 1944, Lt. Comdr. K. C. Ingraham in command.

After a brief fitting out period in the San Francisco Bay area, *Alamosa* sailed for Portland, Oreg. There the ship entered the Commercial Iron Works yards and was decommissioned on 25 August for conversion to an ammunition issue ship. She was recommissioned on 25 September and got underway on 6 October for shakedown out of San Pedro, Calif. After taking on ammunition at Mare Island, *Alamosa* set sail on November for the Marshall Islands.

Upon arriving at Eniwetok on 7 December, *Alamosa* was assigned to Service Squadron 8. For the duration of World War II, the vessel carried ammunition and cargo between Eniwetok, Saipan, Guam, Ulithi, Peleliu, and Leyte.

After the end of hostilities, *Alamosa* entered drydock at Apra Harbor, Guam, on 1 October 1945. Following the completion of repairs, she got underway again on 7 January 1946, bound for home. She arrived at Seattle, Wash., on 27 January; was decommissioned there on 20 May 1946; and was turned over to the Maritime Commission's War Shipping Administration for disposal. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 14 June 1946. The ship remained in the hands of the Maritime Commission until early 1970 when she disappeared from merchant ship registers.

Alamuchee

An Indian word, possibly an alternative rendering of *Alamucha*, the name of a former Choctaw town in Kemper County, Miss., near the Tombigbee River.

(YTB-228: dp. 410; l. 110'0"; b. 27'0"; dr. 11'4"; s. 12 k.; cpl. 12;
a. 2 .50-cal. mg.; cl. *Cahto*)

Alamuchee (YTB-228) was laid down on 3 July 1944 at Camden, N.J., by the Mathis Yacht Building Co.; launched on 12 February 1945; and placed in service on 4 May 1945.

The large harbor tug was assigned to the 8th Naval District and spent the next 15 years operating at New Orleans, La. Her name was struck from the Navy list in April 1960, and she was transferred to the state of Louisiana in August of that year. She was operated by the Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans as a firefighting tug until 1965. The tug was sold at public auction by the Louisiana government to Mr. George W. Whiteman on 9 August 1965.

Alarka

A word, purportedly of American Indian origin, whose definition has not been found.

(YTB-229: dp. 400; l. 110'0"; b. 27'0"; dr. 11'4"; s. 12 k.; cpl. 20;
a. 2 .50-cal. mg.; cl. *Cahto*)

Alarka (YTB-229) was laid down on 31 August 1944 at Greenport (Long Island), N.Y., by the Greenport Basin & Construction Co.; launched on 20 January 1945; sponsored by Mrs. Horace W. Watts, the head of the William and Watts firm which performed electrical work under subcontract during the construction of the tug; delivered to the Navy on 5 April 1945; and placed in service on 6 April 1945. Early in May, the large harbor tug departed New York and proceeded, via the Panama Canal and Pearl Harbor, to the western Pacific. She arrived in Buckner Bay, Okinawa, late in August or early in September. She served there and later at Sasebo, Japan, where she was placed out of service sometime late in 1946. On 23 December 1946, she was sold to the Chinese Supply Commission. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 28 January 1947.

Alarm

(Torpedo Boat: dp. 800; l. 158'6"; b. 28'0"; dr. 10'6"; s. 10 k.;
a. 1 gun)

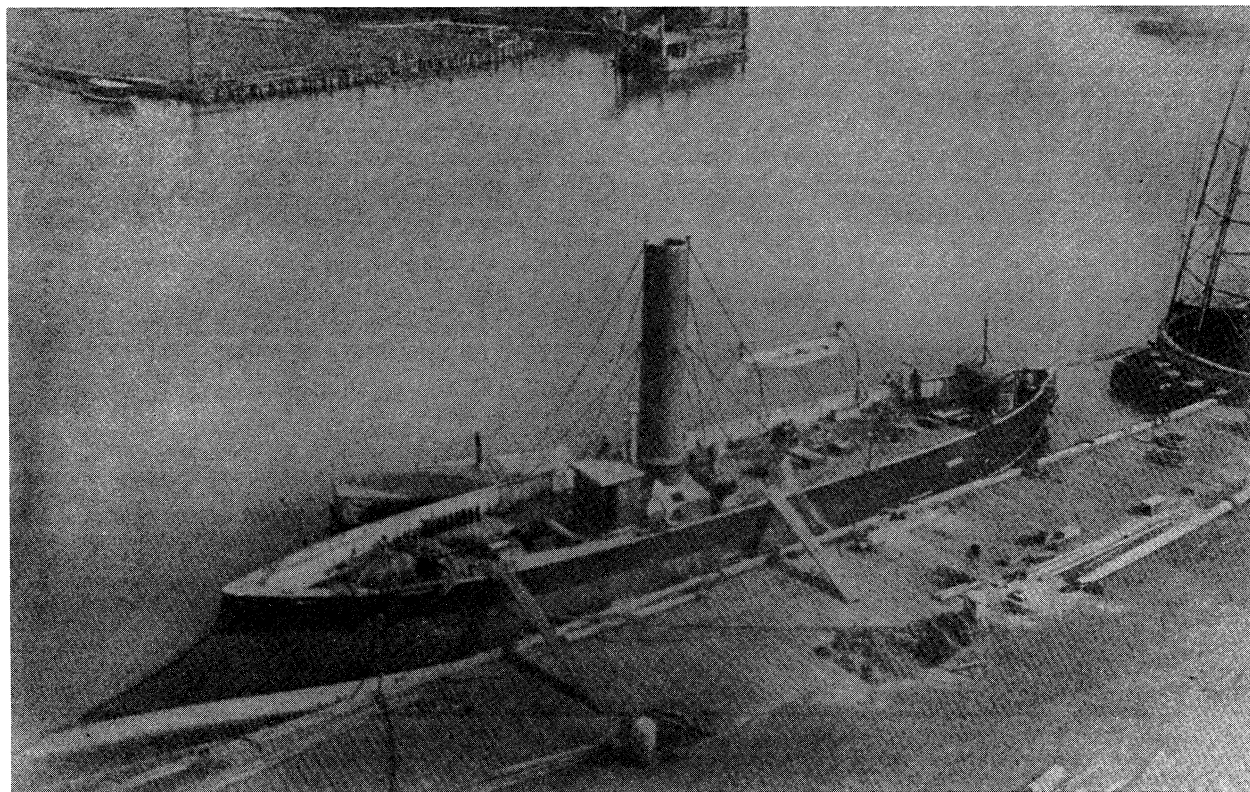
Alarm—an experimental torpedo boat constructed at the New York Navy Yard—was launched on 13 November 1873 and commissioned in 1874.

Designed and constructed specifically for the experimental work of the Bureau of Ordnance, *Alarm* served that purpose at Washington, D.C., until 1877 when she moved north to Newport, R.I., to conduct experiments at the torpedo station. She returned to Washington the following year and resumed special service. In 1880, she began a tour of experimental work at New York which she carried out until she was laid up at Norfolk, Va., in 1883. However, she resumed her research duties at New York in 1884 and served there until she was placed out of commission in 1885 and berthed at New York.

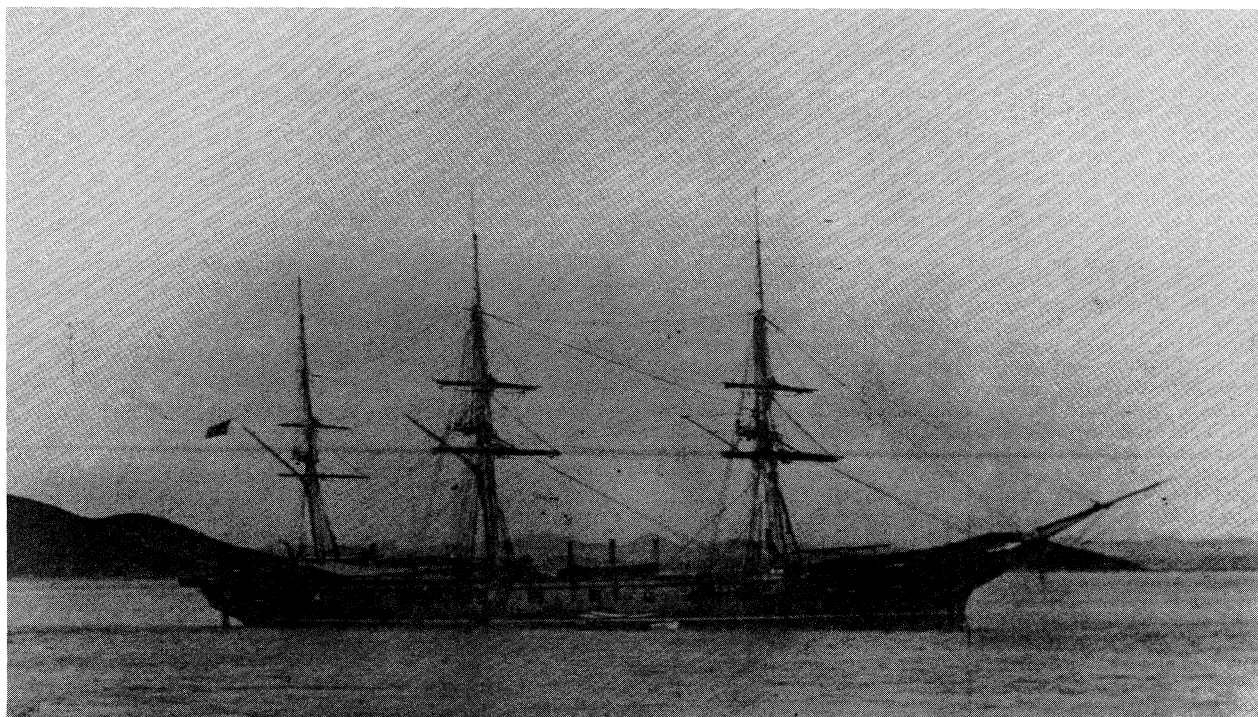
The records are unclear, but *Alarm* probably remained out of commission from that time forward. In 1890 and 1891, she was undergoing conversion to a gunnery training ship. From 1892 to 1894, she remained at the New York Navy Yard. In 1895, she was listed as "in ordinary;" and, in 1897, her name was struck from the Navy list. She was sold on 23 February 1898.

(AM-140: dp. 650; l. 184'6"; b. 33'0"; dr. 9'9"; s. 14.8 k.;
cpl. 104; a. 1 3", 4 40mm.; cl. *Admirable*)

Alarm (AM-140) was laid down on 8 June 1942 at Tampa, Fla., by the Tampa Shipbuilding Co.; launched on December 1942; sponsored by Mrs. M. A. Lynch; and completed on 5 August 1943. On the latter day, she was transferred to the Soviet Navy under the lend-lease program and served them as *T-113*. Never returned by the Soviets, *Alarm* was carried on the American Navy list—as MSF-140 after 7 February 1955—until 1 January 1983 when her name was struck.



Alarm at the New York Navy Yard, circa 1876. (NH 57292)



Alaska during the Korean Expedition, between 16 May and 11 June 1871. (NH 63654)

Alaska

A territory acquired by the United States from Russia in 1867. Alaska—located in the far northwestern corner of the North American continent and separated from the contiguous 48 states by Canada—was admitted to the Union as the 49th state in 1959.

I

(SeStr: dp. 2,394; lbp. 250'6"; b. 38'0"; dr. 16'0"; s. 11.5 k.; cpl. 273; a. 1 11" sb., 10 9" sb., 1 60-pdr. r., 2 20-pdr. r.)

Built at the Boston Navy Yard, the first *Alaska*—a wooden-hulled screw sloop of war—was launched on 31 October 1868; sponsored by Miss Grace Hull, the daughter of Mayor Hull of Boston; and commissioned on 8 December 1869, Comdr. Homer C. Blake in command.

On 9 April 1870, *Alaska* got underway from New York in company with Rear Admiral John Rodger's flagship, the screw frigate *Colorado*. However, the two warships soon parted company; and *Alaska* steamed independently to the Far East where she visited many of the more important ports to show the flag until May 1871. At that time, *Alaska* joined four other ships of the Asiatic Squadron in a visit to Korea in order to secure a treaty to open the "Hermit Kingdom" to the west. The five ships departed Nagasaki, Japan, on 16 May 1871 and arrived at Roze Roads near the mouth of the Salee River on the 24th. Due to her deep draft, *Alaska* herself was unable to ascend the river. Nevertheless, her commanding officer was placed in charge of the surveying expedition—consisting of *Palos*, *Monocacy*, and some steam launches from the larger ships—which ascended the river.

When the American vessels drew fire from a trio of Korean forts, Rear Admiral John Rodgers decided upon a punitive action to capture and destroy the forts in reprisal. Again *Alaska's* Comdr. Blake took command of the enterprise which was made up of 769 sailors and marines, seven 12-pounder howitzers, four steam launches, and numerous boats. *Palos* and *Monocacy* provided the distant, heavy support. The force, after initial difficulty getting ashore across tidal mudflats, quickly occupied the first of the three forts—abandoned by its garrison—and consolidated its

beachhead in preparation for the assault on the remaining forts the following day. On that morning—thanks to *Monocacy's* heavy ordnance—the second fort fell just as easily as the first had done. *Palos* had been damaged by an uncharted rock the previous evening and had to be withdrawn from the action.

The main fort, however, had to be taken by storm and hand-to-hand combat. Discipline and modern weapons triumphed over greatly superior numbers and, by the end of the day on the 11th, all three Korean forts belonged to the Americans. The next day, officers and men of the landing force reembarked in their ships to await the Korean government's response to the punitive expedition. By 3 July, it became apparent that the Korean government would make no official response to the action and that the desired treaty was not in the offing. Accordingly, *Alaska* and her consorts got underway to resume their duties on the Asiatic station.

That duty continued until 28 October 1872 when the steamer departed Hong Kong, bound for New York. She spent the first seven months of 1873 undergoing repairs at New York. *Alaska* put to sea on 28 August for duty with the European Squadron. She arrived at Cadiz, Spain, on 25 September but remained on station only a bit over two months.

Long restive under Spanish rule, separatist factions in Cuba had begun fighting for freedom. In 1870, the rebels had acquired the American sidewheel steamship *Virginus* to carry irregular troops and supplies. Late in October 1873, the Spanish man-of-war *Tornado* captured the insurgent transport on the high seas and took her to Santiago, where passengers and crew were arrested. Speedily tried by court-martial, most of the prisoners were condemned to death; and, between 4 and 13 November, 53 were executed—of whom eight were American citizens, including the transport's master, Capt. Joseph Fry.

The United States consul at Santiago cabled reports of this tragic development, requesting the protection of United States warships to protect American lives. Anger at this wanton slaughter flared throughout the United States, and Secretary of the Navy Robeson ordered the European and South Atlantic Squadrons to join the Home Squadron at Key West, Fla., to prepare for the outbreak of war which appeared to be imminent.

On 30 November, *Alaska* and the rest of the European Squadron sailed for Key West, Fla., where she and her sisters of the

three squadrons were combined in a single fleet for several months of operations supporting diplomatic efforts to obtain redress.

After negotiations freed the remaining prisoners and indemnities for the families were arranged, *Alaska* headed back to the European Station on 9 April 1874 and, for most of what remained of the year, visited ports along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Either late in 1874 or early in 1875, she put into La Spezia, Italy, for repairs. On 10 May 1875, the warship departed La Spezia and resumed her schedule of Mediterranean port visits. Near the end of May, however, she exited the Mediterranean Sea for a circuit of calls at northern European and Baltic Sea ports. *Alaska* completed that cruise and reentered the Mediterranean Sea on 19 September.

The warship continued operations in the Mediterranean for about a year and then returned to the United States early in October 1876. She was decommissioned at New York on 5 October 1876 for extended repairs.

Alaska was placed back in commission on 23 April 1878 and put to sea from New York on 14 June, bound for the Pacific. After rounding Cape Horn late in the summer of 1878, she called at Callao, Peru, on the 23d. Following visits to several other Latin American ports, *Alaska* arrived in San Francisco on 11 March 1879. On the 22d, she got underway for Sitka, Alaska, where Indian unrest endangered the lives and property of American citizens. She arrived at Sitka on 3 April, and—except for a voyage to Victoria, British Columbia, late in April—she served there until 16 June. The warship returned to San Francisco on 24 June and remained there until 12 August when she began a series of visits to ports along the west coasts of Central and South America.

That employment carried her into 1880. On 22 July 1880, *Alaska* departed Chimote, Peru, and headed for the South Pacific. On the outward-bound voyage, she visited the Marquesas before arriving at Pago Pago, Samoa, on 27 August and served there until 7 October when she weighed anchor to return to the west coast of the United States. En route home, she stopped at Honolulu, Hawaii, before arriving back in San Francisco on 2 December. She then entered the Mare Island Navy Yard for repairs which kept her from returning to sea until 14 March 1881. She then began another extended cruise highlighted by calls at a number of Central and South American ports along the Pacific coast. That mission lasted through the remainder of 1881 and the first half of 1882. On 29 July 1882, the warship departed Callao, Peru, bound for the Hawaiian Islands, and arrived at Honolulu on 6 September. She returned to San Francisco late in the year and entered the drydock there in December. Apparently surveyed and found wanting, she was decommissioned at San Francisco on 13 February 1883 and was sold at Mare Island on 20 November 1883.

II

(Trawler: t. 229 (gross); l. 141'9"; b. 21'0"; dr. 10'6" (aft); s. 10 k.; cpl. 27)

The second *Alaska* (Id. No. 3035)—a steam-powered fishing trawler built in 1881 at Boothbay, Maine—was chartered by the Navy from the Fisheries Products Co., Wilmington, N.C., on 18 September 1918 and commissioned at the Charleston Navy Yard that same day. Converted for service as a minesweeper, she served in the Charleston area for the remainder of World War I and briefly thereafter. She was returned to her owner on 10 January 1919; and her name was struck from the Navy list that same day.

III

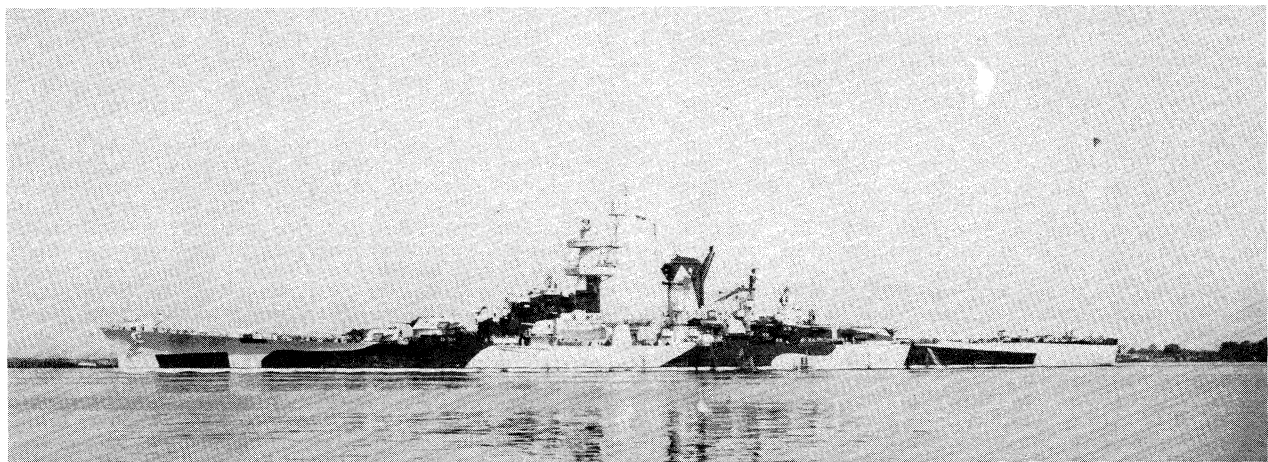
(CB-1: dp. 27,000; l. 806'6"; b. 91'1"; dr. 27'1" (mean); s. 31.4 k.; cpl. 2,251; a. 9 12", 12 5", 56 40mm., 34 20mm.; ac. 4; cl. *Alaska*)

The third *Alaska* (CB-1)—the first of a class of "large cruisers" designed as a compromise to achieve a fast cruiser with a relatively heavy main battery—was laid down on 17 December 1941 at Camden, N.J., by the New York Shipbuilding Corp.; launched on 15 August 1943; sponsored by Mrs. Ernest Gruening, wife of the Honorable Ernest Gruening, Governor of Alaska; and commissioned at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on 17 June 1944, Capt. Peter K. Fischler in command.

Following post-commissioning fitting out at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, *Alaska* stood down the Delaware River on 6 August 1944, bound for Hampton Roads, escorted by *Simpson* (DD-221) and *Broome* (DD-210). She then conducted an intensive shake-down, first in Chesapeake Bay and then in the Gulf of Paria, off Trinidad, British West Indies, escorted by *Bainbridge* (DD-246) and *Decatur* (DD-341). Steaming via Annapolis, Md., and Norfolk, *Alaska* returned to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, where the large cruiser underwent changes and alterations to her fire control suite: the fitting of four Mk. 57 directors for her five-inch battery.

Alaska departed Philadelphia on 12 November 1944 for the Caribbean, in company with *Thomas E. Fraser* (DM-24), and, after two weeks of standardization trials out of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, sailed for the Pacific on 2 December. She completed her transit of the Panama Canal on 4 December, and reached San Diego on the 12th. Thereafter, the new large cruiser trained in shore bombardment and anti-aircraft firing off San Diego before an availability at Hunter's Point, near San Francisco.

On 8 January 1945, *Alaska* sailed for Hawaii, and reached Pearl Harbor on the 13th, where, on the 27th, Capt. Kenneth M.



Alaska (CB-1), in Measure 32/1D camouflage (light gray, dull gray, and dull black) underway in the Delaware River, near the Philadelphia Navy Yard, 30 July 1944. (NH 92282)

Noble relieved Capt. Fischler, who had achieved flag rank. Over the ensuing days, *Alaska* conducted further training before getting underway as a unit of Task Group (TG) 12.2, weighing anchor for the western Pacific on 29 January. She reached Ulithi, the fleet anchorage in the Caroline Islands, on 6 February, and there joined TG 58.5, a task group in the famed Task Force (TF) 58, the fast carrier task force.

Alaska sailed for the Japanese home islands as part of TG 58.5 on 10 February 1945, assigned the mission of screening the aircraft carriers *Saratoga* (CV-3) and *Enterprise* (CV-6) as they carried out night air strikes against Tokyo and its airfields. During the voyage, all hands on board *Alaska* speculated about what lay ahead—almost three-quarters of the men had never seen action before—and sought out the veterans in their midst “for counsel and advice.”

Sensing the air of expectation on board his ship, Capt. Noble spoke to the crew over the public address system and reassured them of his confidence in them. In doing so, he used an analogy familiar to most Americans: “We are a member of a large task force which is going to pitch directly over the home plate of the enemy,” he said, “It is our particular job to back up the pitchers.”

Backing up the “pitchers” proved comparatively easy. TF 58, cloaked by bad weather, approached the Japanese homeland from east of the Marianas. Using radio deception and deploying submarines, long-range patrol aircraft from Fleet Air Wing 1, and Army Air Force Boeing B-29 “Superfortresses” as scouts, ahead of the advancing task force, the Americans neared their objective undetected. The first major carrier strike against the heart of the Japanese Empire, a year after the successful raids on Truk, covered the developing Iwo Jima landings and proved good practice for future operations against Okinawa. The low ceiling prevented Japanese retaliation, thus giving *Alaska* no opportunity to put into practice her rigorous antiaircraft training as she guarded the carriers. Assigned to TG 58.4 soon thereafter, *Alaska* supported the Iwo Jima operations, and, as before, no enemy aircraft came near the carrier formation to which the large cruiser was attached. For nineteen days she screened the carriers before retiring to Ulithi to take on stores and carry out minor repairs.

With the decision reached to occupy Okinawa, in the Nansei Shoto chain, in early April of 1945, invasion planners proceeded on the assumption that the Japanese would resist with maximum available naval and air strength. To destroy as many planes as possible—and thus diminish the possibility of American naval forces coming under air attack from Japanese planes—the fast carrier task force was hurled against the enemy’s homeland again: to strike airfields on Kyushu, Shikoku, and western Honshu.

Alaska, still with TG 58.4—formed around the fleet carriers *Yorktown* (CV-10), *Intrepid* (CV-11), *Independence* (CVL-22) and *Langley* (CVL-27)—again drew the duty of protecting the valuable flattops. Her principal mission then, as it had been before, was defense of the task group against enemy air or surface attacks.

Its battle plan outlined in detail, TF 58 cruised northwesterly from the Carolines, following the departure from Ulithi on 14 March. Refueling at sea on the 16th, this mighty force reached a point southeast of Kyushu early on the 18th. On that day, the planes from TG 58.4 swept over Japanese airfields at Usa, Oita, and Saeki, joining those from three other task groups, TG 58.1, TG 58.2, and TG 58.3 in claiming 107 enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground and a further 77 (of 142) engaged over the target area.

Alaska tasted action for the first time as the Japanese retaliated with air strikes of their own. Task Force 58’s radars provided “little if any warning” of the approach of enemy planes, due to the weather conditions encountered. All too often, the first indication of the enemy’s presence was a visual sighting. *Alaska* spotted a “Frances” at 0810 and commenced fire. She registered hits almost immediately but the suicider maintained its course—toward the stern of the nearby *Intrepid*. Less than a half-mile from his quarry, however, the “Frances” exploded into fragments with a direct hit from *Alaska*’s guns.

Soon thereafter, *Alaska* received word of the proximity of “friendlies” in the vicinity. At 0822, a single-engined plane approached the large cruiser “in a threatening fashion” from ahead, in a shallow dive. *Alaska* opened fire promptly and scored hits. Unfortunately, almost simultaneously her fire controlmen were receiving word that the plane was, indeed, a friendly F6F

“Hellcat.” Fortunately, the pilot was uninjured and ditched his crippled plane; another ship in the disposition picked him up.

For the balance of the day, the suicide attacks continued. The vigilant combat air patrol (CAP), however, downed a dozen planes over the task force while ships’ gunfire accounted for almost two dozen more. *Alaska* added a second enemy bomber to her “bag” when she splashed a “Judy” at about 1315.

The next morning, the 19th, photo reconnaissance having disclosed the presence of a large number of major Japanese fleet units in the Inland Sea, TF 58 launched planes to go after them. TG 58.4’s aircraft took on targets of opportunity at Kobe; others at Kure and Hiroshima. Extremely heavy and accurate enemy antiaircraft fire, however, rendered the attacks only moderately successful for TF 58’s aviators.

Shortly after the first strikes had been launched, however, the Japanese struck back, hitting TG 58.2, some 20 miles to the northward of the other groups in TF 58. At about 0708, *Franklin* (CV-13) reeled under the impact of two bomb hits; *Wasp* (CV-18) too, fell victim to Japanese bombs. On board *Alaska*, those in a position to watch the developing battle noted a flash, followed by a slowly rising column of smoke. “All who saw it knew that a carrier had been hit,” the cruiser’s historian records, “and soon the radio brought confirmation that the *Franklin* had been the victim . . .”

The thin cloud layer having rendered radar largely useless, Japanese planes attacked all task groups. During the afternoon, TF 58 retired slowly to the southwestward, covering the crippled *Franklin* and simultaneously launching fighter sweeps against airfields on Kyushu in order to disorganize any attempted strikes against it. To further protect *Franklin*, a salvage unit, Task Unit (TU) 58.2.9, was formed.

Composed of *Alaska*, her sister ship *Guam* (CB-2), the heavy cruiser *Pittsburgh* (CA-72), the light cruiser *Santa Fe* (CL-60), and three destroyer divisions, TU 58.2.9 drew the duty of screening the damaged “Big Ben,” as *Franklin* had been affectionately nicknamed by her crew. Ordered to make its best speed toward Guam, TU 58.2.9 set out in that direction, covered by TU 58.2.0, four aircraft carriers and the remaining heavy units originally assigned to TG 58.2 at the outset.

The initial part of the voyage proved uneventful, and not until the afternoon did Japanese aircraft appear. Several bogies (unidentified aircraft) showed up on the radar screens; investigation revealed most to be Navy PB4Y patrol bombers failing to show IFF (identification, friend or foe). Two of three CAP divisions sent out to challenge a bogey identified it as a PB4Y; unfortunately, because the friendly character of one bogey was established, the interception of a second bogey at about the same time failed to materialize. Only poor marksmanship on the part of the “Judy” pilot saved *Franklin* from another bomb hit. *Alaska* added to the hail of gunfire put up on the “Judy” but it sped away, unscathed. The final salvo from *Alaska*’s mount 51 caused flash burns on men manning a 40-millimeter mount nearby—the only casualties suffered by the large cruiser. Later that day, *Alaska* received on board 15 men from *Franklin* for medical treatment.

The following morning, *Alaska* assumed fighter director duty, and controlled three divisions of fighters from *Hancock* (CV-19). While these divisions remained on station pending the arrival of their relief, *Alaska*’s SK radar picked up a bogey, 35 miles away, at 1143. The large cruiser vectored the CAP fighters to the scene, and at 1148, heard the “tallyho” indicating that the CAP had spotted the bogey. At 1149, the fighters splashed a “Nick” 19 miles away.

On 22 March, *Alaska*’s part in the escort of the damaged *Franklin* was complete, and she rejoined TG 58.4, fueling that same day from *Chicopee* (AO-34). At 2342, one of the destroyers in the screen, *Haggard* (DD-555), reported a “skunk” (submarine contact) 25,000 yards distant. She and *Uhlmann* (DD-687) were detached to investigate, and early the next morning, *Haggard* rammed and sank a Japanese submarine (perhaps *I-370*, which had departed the Bungo Channel on 21 February 1945 for Iwo Jima as part of a special *kaiten*-carrying attack unit), suffering enough damage herself in the encounter to be ordered back to base in company with *Uhlmann*.

Over the next few days, the air strikes against Okinawa continued, setting the stage for the landing set to commence on Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945. *Alaska* continued to provide support for the carriers launching the strikes until detached on 27

March to carry out a shore bombardment against Minami Daito Shima, a tiny island 160 miles east of Okinawa. The task unit, TU 58.4.9, consisted of *Alaska*, *Guam*, *San Diego* (CL-53), *Flint* (CL-97), and Destroyer Squadron 47.

Ordered to carry out the shoot en route to a fueling area, *Alaska* and *Guam* and their screen steamed west of the island on north/south courses between 2245 on 27 March and 0030 on the 28th. *Alaska*'s main battery hurled 45 high-capacity rounds shoreward, while her five-inch battery added 352 rounds of anti-aircraft common. No answering fire came from the beach, and *Alaska*'s observers noted "satisfactory fires" on the island.

Rejoining TG 58.4 at the fueling rendezvous, *Alaska* transferred the *Franklin* wounded to *Tomahawk* (AO-88) while she took on fuel from the fleet oiler. She then resumed her screening of the fast carriers as they carried out operations in support of the build-up and landing on Okinawa, on the alert to repel aircraft attacks. The landings went off as scheduled on 1 April, and her operations over ensuing days supported the troops. On 7 April, Japanese surface units moving through the East China Sea toward Okinawa to disrupt the landings ran afoul of a massive air strike from Vice Admiral Marc Mitscher's fast carrier task force which sank the giant battleship *Yamato*, one cruiser and four destroyers.

Operating off Okinawa and Kyushu, *Alaska* lent the protection of her guns to the fast carriers in the task group which sent daily sweeps of "Hellcats" and "Corsairs" over enemy airfields, shore installations and shipping. On the evening of 11 April, *Alaska* chalked up an assist in shooting down a Japanese plane, shot down one, unassisted, and claimed what might have been a piloted rocket bomb "baka" on the night of 11-12 April.

Four days later, on the 16th, *Alaska*'s gunfire splashed what were probably a "Judy" and two "Zekes," and the ship claimed assists in downing three additional enemy aircraft. That same day, however, an enemy aircraft managed to get through *Alaska*'s barrage to crash *Intrepid*. That night, though, the cruiser's gunfire proved instrumental in driving off a single snooper attempting to close the formation. On the night of 21-22 April, the cruiser again used her heavy anti-aircraft battery to drive off single planes attempting to attack the task group. On the night of 29-30 April, toward the end of the ship's time at sea with the fast carriers for that stretch, *Alaska* twice drove off attacking groups of Japanese planes.

Alaska anchored back at Ulithi on 14 May, bringing to a close a cruise of almost two months' duration. Ten days later, after rest and refreshment, the ship sailed—now part of the 3d Fleet—and with TG 38.4. Newcomers to the formation included the battleship *Iowa* (BB-61) and the carrier *Ticonderoga* (CV-14). Over the next two weeks, *Alaska* again screened a portion of the fast carrier task force, and conducted her second shore bombardment when, on 9 June, she and her sister ship *Guam* shelled the Japanese-held Okino Daito Shima, just south of Minami Daito Shima which had been visited by the two cruisers in late March, and known to have enemy radar sites located there.

Subsequently, the task group sailed southwesterly for San Pedro Bay, Leyte, reaching its destination on the afternoon of 13 June 1945. A month in Leyte Gulf then ensued—a period of "rest, refreshment, and maintenance"—before *Alaska* sailed again on 13 July, this time as part of the newly formed TF 95. Reaching Buckner Bay, Okinawa, on the 16th, TF 95 fueled there and then sailed the following day, bound for the coast of China and a foray into the East China Sea, long a hunting ground for American planes and submarines but not entered by an American surface force since before Pearl Harbor.

Although planners for the sweep had anticipated resistance, none materialized; *Alaska*, *Guam*, and their consorts ranged the area at will, encountering only Chinese fishing junks. Enemy aircraft venturing out to attack the task force several times fell to CAP fighters. Operating out of Buckner Bay, *Alaska* participated in three sweeps into these waters, and all could see how effective the blockade of Japan had become; no Japanese ships were sighted during the course of the operation. Commented *Guam*'s commanding officer, Capt. Leland P. Lovette: "We went prepared to tangle with a hornet's nest and wound up in a field of pansies—but we've proved a point and the East China Sea is ours to do with as we please."

Buckner Bay proved to offer more excitement than the sweeps. Even the war's waning days possessed elements of danger; on 12 August a Japanese torpedo plane scored a hit on the battleship *Pennsylvania* (BB-38), near *Alaska*'s anchorage. Over the days

that ensued, nightly sorties to avoid last-ditch suiciders took place. When the war did finally end in mid-August, the ship went wild with joy, as *Alaska*'s chronicler wrote: "We knew that we would be going home far sooner than any of us had ever expected when we first set out the preceding January for the combat area."

There was, however, still work to be done. On 30 August, *Alaska* sailed from Okinawa as part of the 7th Fleet's occupation forces, and after taking part in a "show of force" in the Yellow Sea and Gulf of Chihli, reached Jinsen (later Inchon), Korea, on 8 September 1945. *Alaska* supported the landing of Army occupation troops at Jinsen, and remained at that port until 26 September, on which date she sailed for Tsingtao, China, making port the following day. She shifted to an anchorage outside the harbor entrance on 11 October to support the 6th Marine Division landings to occupy the key North China seaport, and ultimately remained at Tsingtao until 13 November, when she got underway to return to Jinsen, there to embark returning Army soldiers homeward-bound as part of Operation "Magic Carpet." Sailing for the United States on 14 November, *Alaska* stopped briefly at Pearl Harbor before proceeding on to San Francisco.

Steaming thence to the Panama Canal, and completing her transit of the isthmian waterway on 13 December 1945, *Alaska* proceeded to the Boston Naval Shipyard, arriving on 18 December. There she underwent an availability preparing her for inactivation. Departing Boston on 1 February 1946 for her assigned permanent berthing area at Bayonne, N.J., *Alaska* arrived there the following day. Placed in inactive status, "in commission, in reserve" at Bayonne, on 13 August 1946, *Alaska* was ultimately placed out of commission, in reserve, on 17 February 1947.

The large cruiser never returned to active duty. Her name struck from the Naval Vessel Register on 1 June 1960, the ship was sold on 30 June 1960 to the Lipsett Division of Luria Brothers of New York City, to be broken up for scrap.

Alaska (CB-1) was awarded three battle stars for her World War II service.

IV

(SSBN-732: dp. 16,600 (surf.); 18,750 (subm.); l. 560'; b. 42'; dr. 35.5'; s. 20+ k.; cpl. 133; a. 24 Trident mis., 4 21" tt.; cl. *Ohio*)

The fourth *Alaska* (SSBN-732) was laid down on 9 March 1983 at Groton, Conn., by the Electric Boat Division of the General Dynamics Corp.; launched on 12 January 1985; sponsored by Mrs. Catherine Ann Stevens; and commissioned at the Submarine Base, New London, on 25 January 1986, Capt. Paul L. Callahan (Blue Crew) and Capt. Charles J. Chotvacs (Gold Crew) in command.

Alaska spent much of 1986 engaged in shakedown training for her two crews and in clearing up the many details that attend a new ship's addition to the Fleet.

Alaskan

(ScStr: dp. 19,419; l. 490'0"; b. 57'2"; dr. 31'10" (aft); s. 10.15 k.; cpl. 94; a. 1 6", 1 6-pdr.)

Alaskan—a twin-screw steel-hulled cargo ship—was launched in 1902 at San Francisco, Calif., by the Union Iron Works. Built for the American-Hawaiian Steamship Line, for the New York-to-San Francisco-to-Honolulu trade, *Alaskan* and her sister ship, *Arizonan*, represented, according to a contemporary account, the "most advanced practice in the construction of ocean-going freighters and . . . a most important addition to the American merchant marine." Intended exclusively for freight-carrying, *Alaskan* was designed as a very strong vessel with large stowage capacity.

Such a desirable vessel naturally came under the scrutiny of the Navy as it expanded to cope with its mission during World War I. Inspected in the 3d Naval District on 23 May 1917, *Alaskan* was assigned the identification number (Id. No.) 4542, but not taken over by the Navy for several more months. On 12 March 1918, a despatch indicates that the Shipping Board would turn the ship over to the War Department as a cargo carrier to be manned and operated by the Naval Overseas Transportation

Service (NOTS) for the Army on a bare ship basis. She was taken over on that same day and commissioned on 23 March 1918 at Morse's Dry Dock, Brooklyn, N.Y., Lt. Comdr. Walter P. Hillman, USNR, in command.

Alaskan sailed for Hampton Roads, Va., on the afternoon of 24 March 1918. Anchoring in Hampton Roads in the predawn darkness of the 26th, she moved shortly thereafter to the Norfolk and Western Piers, docking at 1228. Over the ensuing days, the cargo ship received more men and underwent needed repairs. Yard work completed and complement brought up to full allowance, the ship shifted to Pier 5, U. S. Army Piers, Newport News, to take on cargo, on 13 April. Three days later, she proceeded to sea and joined a France-bound convoy on the 17th. She reached Brest on the afternoon of 2 May, before weighing anchor early the next morning to proceed in a coastal convoy to St. Nazaire.

En route, one of the ships in the convoy, the American SS *Pearl F.*, attempted to cut between columns, veering across *Alaskan's* bow. The accident resulted in *Alaskan's* stem being badly twisted to starboard, and plates attached thereto either broken off or cracked, but she was still able to complete the voyage, anchoring at St. Nazaire that evening. However, due to crowded harbor conditions, she did not begin discharging cargo until 6 May.

A week later, lookouts spotted a fire breaking out on board *Mexican* (Id. No. 1655), lying directly ahead of them in St. Nazaire harbor. *Alaskan* called away her fire and rescue party, which aided *Mexican's* men in controlling the blaze before it did serious damage.

Alaskan remained in French waters into June, first at St. Nazaire, completing the discharge of her cargo, before she proceeded down the coast, passing the Ile de Yeu on 7 June in a coastal convoy bound for the Gironde River, which she reached later that day. Getting underway on the 10th for the return voyage to the United States, the ship brought her first voyage for NOTS to a close when she reached New York harbor late on the 23rd.

Her second wartime voyage began on 28 July, after the ship had undergone voyage repairs at Morse Drydock, Brooklyn, before moving to Bush Terminal Pier No. 6 to take on cargo. Carrying the vice commodore of the convoy, Lt. Comdr. Isaiah F. Shurtleff, USNR, *Alaskan* arrived at St. Nazaire on 12 August, anchoring late the following day. Among the cargo she discharged was oil for the tanks at the United States Naval Aviation Station, Le Croisic. With a return cargo that included ordnance material, the freighter got underway for home on the afternoon of 28 August and reached Hampton Roads on the afternoon of 13 September.

For her third voyage during the war, *Alaskan* cleared Hampton Roads on 29 September and joined a France-bound convoy the following day, this time routed via Gibraltar. Arriving at the British colony on the 16th of October, *Alaskan* lingered there until the 20th, when she began the last passage of her voyage. Two days out, at 1137 on 22 October, she collided with, and sank, a fishing boat (nationality not specified in the logs). Fortunately, another boat "of similar character" fished the men out of the sea.

Reaching Marseille a little before midnight on 23 October, *Alaskan* discharged lumber, tractors, and trailers, on the 26th and over ensuing days. The cargo ship was still lying in port on 11 November when the news reached her of the signing of the armistice with Germany—an event duly celebrated by the ship's sounding her whistle and hoisting allied flags.

Alaskan ultimately reached Newport News, via Gibraltar, on the afternoon of 29 November 1918, bringing to a close her third and final round-trip voyage under the aegis of NOTS. Now that the war was over "over there," the return of troops became a priority item. *Alaskan* was selected for conversion to a transport to aid in the World War I version of the "Magic Carpet" operations from another global conflict more than two and one-half decades later, and assigned to the Cruiser-Transport Force on 12 December 1918.

Two days before the reassignment, *Alaskan* had sailed for New York, where her guns were ultimately removed by a Navy derrick lighter off Weehawken on 19 December. Over the following weeks, *Alaskan* underwent a metamorphosis from cargoman to trooper, with the addition of troop accommodations for up to 2,260 men. The work was done at Brooklyn by the W. A. Fletcher Shipyard under the direction of Army authorities. Unfortunately, as will be seen, the initial estimates of her troop carrying capacity were much too high.

Alaskan—now a troop transport—cleared New York harbor on 24 February 1919, bound for France, and reached St. Nazaire on 10 March. After embarking troops between 0910 and 1710, on 15 March, she got underway later the same day on the return leg of the voyage. *Alaskan* moored at Army Pier No. 2, Hoboken, on 31 March, and after quick voyage repairs, sailed again for European waters on 7 April. She conducted three more troop voyages, one to Bordeaux and two to St. Nazaire, each time returning to disembark returning doughboys at Hoboken. She sent her last contingents of troops ashore alongside Pier No. 8, Hoboken, on the afternoon of 16 July 1919.

After drydocking at Brooklyn, and the removal of her troop accommodations, *Alaskan* was back at Pier No. 8, Hoboken, by 24 July. On 5 August, at 1602, *Alaskan* was turned over to her prewar owners, the American-Hawaiian Steamship Co.

Alaskan operated under the house flag of the American-Hawaiian Steamship Co., for the rest of her time under the stars and stripes, through the mid-1920's. Sold to Italian interests in 1927, she became *Memore*, and was registered by the *Compagnie Generale Armamento Soc. Anon.*, her home port being listed as Genoa. She remained on contemporary merchant vessel lists until 1933, and then her name disappeared from the rolls. Presumably, she was scrapped in Italy in the early 1930's.

Alatna

A river in north central Alaska rising in the Brooks Range and flowing about 200 miles to the southeast to enter the Kayukuk River.

(AOG-81: dp. 5,720 (f.); l. 302'; b. 61'; dr. 19'; s. 13 k. (tl.); cpl. 51; cl. *Alatna*; T. T1-MET-24a)

Alatna (AOG-81), a gasoline tanker specially constructed for service in polar regions, was launched on 6 September 1956 at Staten Island, New York, by the Bethlehem Steel Corp.; sponsored by Mrs. Wilma Miles; and placed in service with the Military Sea Transportation Service in July of 1957.

Manned by a civil service crew, *Alatna* carried petroleum products from ports along the Atlantic and gulf coasts and in the Caribbean Sea to scattered American outposts in both polar regions. For more than 15 years, the tanker and her crew struggled against snow, wind, and ice to support American military bases in the Arctic and American scientists in the Antarctic. On 8 August 1972, *Alatna* was placed out of service and laid up with the Maritime Commission's National Defense Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay, Calif. As of July 1986, the ship was still there, in reserve.

Alava Bay

A bay indenting the southeastern shore of the Aleutian island of Revillagigedo, four miles northeast of Point Alava, located near the southern entrance of the Behm Canal, near 55°55' north latitude, 131°07' west longitude.

The escort aircraft carrier *Alava Bay* (CVE-103)—her name assigned on 23 September 1943—was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 1140) on 22 March 1944 at Vancouver, Wash., by the Kaiser Co.; but she was renamed *Roi* (q.v.) on 26 April 1944, in keeping with the policy of renaming CVE's to commemorate victorious battles of the then still ongoing war.

Alava, General see *General Alava* (AG-5)

Alazon Bay

The northeastern arm of Baffin Bay which in turn is an estuary emptying into Laguna Madre, a sound paralleling the coast of Texas in the vicinity of Corpus Christi.

The projected aircraft escort vessel, AVG-55, was originally assigned the name *Ameer*; but—following her reclassification as

an auxiliary aircraft carrier, ACV-55, on 20 August 1942—she was renamed *Alazon Bay* on 22 January 1943. The ship was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 1092) on 3 November 1942 at Vancouver, Wash., by the Kaiser Shipbuilding Co.; but on 3 April 1943—two days before her launching—she was again renamed, this time *Casablanca* (q.v.) to commemorate the recent Allied landings in North Africa.

On 28 June 1943, the name *Alazon Bay* was reassigned to the projected auxiliary aircraft carrier, ACV-94, (later to be reclassified CVE-94) but the warship was renamed *Lunga Point* (q.v.) on 6 November 1943, well in advance of her keel-laying which occurred on 19 January 1944.

Albacore

The albacore is a small tuna found in temperate seas throughout the world. It is easily distinguished from other tuna by its pectoral fin. Albacore usually weigh between 40 to 80 pounds. The fish are also noted as rapid swimmers. Albacore is a popular food fish and is one of the most valuable for canning purposes. The albacore is also a fine sporting fish and struggles violently when hooked. The first *Albacore* retained her former name; subsequent ships were named for the fish.

I

(MB: t. 14; l. 50'8"; b. 9'6"; dr. 4'7"; s. 7 k.; a. 1 1-pdr., 1 mg.)

The first *Albacore* (SP-751) was built in 1900 at San Diego, Calif., by Howard Bros.; acquired by the Navy from her owner, Bryant H. Howard of San Diego; ordered to be delivered on 21 June 1917; and commissioned soon thereafter.

The motorboat was assigned to the 12th Naval District, where she operated as a section patrol boat. *Albacore* was returned to her owner on 19 March 1919.

II

(SS-218: dp. 1,526 (surf.), 2,424 (subm.); l. 311'9"; b. 27'3"; dr. 19'3"; s. 20.25 k. (surf.), 8.75 k. (subm.); cpl. 60; a. 1 3", 4 mg. 10 21" tt.; cl. *Gato*)

The second *Albacore* (SS-218) was laid down on 21 April 1941 by the Electric Boat Co., Groton, Conn.; launched on 17 February 1942; sponsored by Mrs. Elwin F. Cutts, the wife of Capt. Cutts; and commissioned on 1 June 1942, Lt. Comdr. Richard Cross Lake in command.

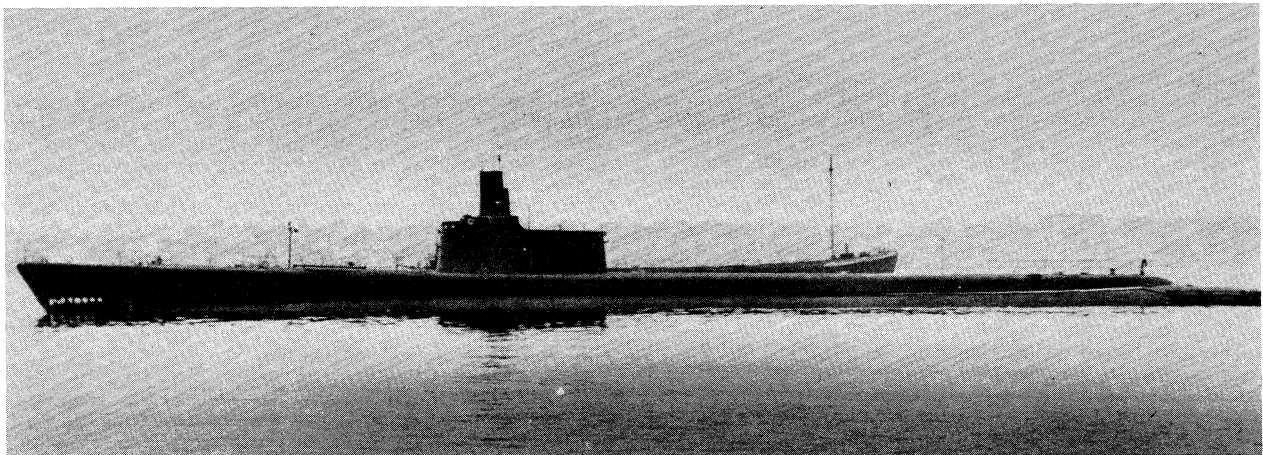
Following shakedown, the submarine proceeded via the Panama Canal to Pearl Harbor and, from that base on 28 August, began her first war patrol which took her to waters of the north

and northeast pass through the coral reef which surrounds the Truk Islands. On 13 September, *Albacore* sighted two cargo vessels sailing in a column formation and prepared for her first combat action. Lake made a submerged approach and fired three torpedoes at the leading ship and two at the second. One—or possibly two—torpedoes hit on the first ship; but none struck the second. *Albacore* claimed to have damaged the leading vessel.

Her next enemy contact came on 1 October when the submarine made a night surface attack on a Japanese tanker. She expended seven torpedoes and scored two hits. Although the tanker appeared to be low in the water, she was still able to leave the scene under her own power. On 9 October, *Albacore* spotted a *Zuikaku*-class carrier escorted by a heavy cruiser and a destroyer but was depth charged by the escorts and forced to break off her pursuit. The next day, she attacked a freighter. One torpedo hit the mark; and, 12 minutes after firing, the sound of two heavy explosions caused the submarine's crew to presume that they had downed the vessel.

Beginning at mid-morning on 11 October, *Albacore* underwent a series of depth chargings, all of which exploded close aboard. At 1548, the conning officer finally spotted the Japanese attackers, two submarine chasers and an airplane. A third ship equipped with sound gear joined the group and continued the hunt. The ships crisscrossed over *Albacore* close enough for propeller noise to reverberate throughout the submarine and compelled her to proceed under her most silent running conditions. All auxiliary systems were secured, off-duty men remained in their bunks, and all watch personnel were barefoot. After a chase of nearly seven hours, the Japanese ships disappeared astern, and *Albacore* then surfaced to clear the immediate area. On 12 October, *Albacore* headed for Midway. Although she had had several opportunities to score during the patrol, *Albacore* was not credited with any damage to Japanese shipping. The submarine arrived at Midway on 20 October and commenced a refit.

With her refurbishing completed and a new 20-millimeter gun installed, *Albacore* sailed on 11 November for her second patrol. Her assigned areas were the Roger St. George's Channel, New Britain; along the east coast of New Guinea to Vitiaz Strait; and the Dallman Pass off Madang harbor, New Guinea. On 24 November, the submarine spotted a convoy of two cargo vessels and their escorts. *Albacore* maneuvered into position and fired two stern tubes, but neither torpedo found its target. Two days later, on 26 November, *Albacore* herself became the quarry. Two Japanese destroyers depth charged her, and the explosions caused numerous small leaks around the cable packing glands in the pressure hull. After a two-hour chase, the Japanese retired; and *Albacore* shifted her patrol area to Vitiaz Strait. Another golden opportunity arose on 13 December, when *Albacore* found three Japanese destroyers. She released a three-torpedo spread but again was unsuccessful. On 18 December, *Albacore* was stationed in the area of Madang, New Guinea. The submarine discovered what seemed to be a transport and a destroyer.



Albacore (SS-218) in Measure 9 camouflage (dull black) off Groton, 9 May 1942. Note the large conning tower and periscope sheers. (NH 57776)

Albacore torpedoed the "transport," and it exploded in a mass of flames and sank. *Albacore* had in fact downed the light cruiser *Tenryu*, a 3,300-ton vessel and the second Japanese cruiser sunk by an American submarine in World War II. *Albacore* put into port at Brisbane, Australia, on 30 December 1942.

After an overhaul of her engines, *Albacore* got underway on 20 January 1943 to begin her third patrol. Off the north coast of New Guinea, she spotted 11 targets in as many days. The first group, encountered on 20 February, consisted of a destroyer and a frigate escorting a minelayer. *Albacore* fired 10 torpedoes and believed she had downed the destroyer and damaged the frigate. In the following days, *Albacore* attacked one tanker, several freighters, and another destroyer. Of eight torpedoes expended during these actions, all missed their targets. When *Albacore* ended her patrol at Brisbane on 11 March, she was credited with sinking one destroyer and a frigate for a total of 2,250 tons lost.

Albacore was briefly drydocked for repairs and underwent refresher training before sailing for a fourth patrol on 6 April. This time, her area was around the Solomon and Bismarck Islands and off the north coast of New Guinea. While she sighted several convoys, she recorded no hits. *Albacore* returned to Brisbane on 26 May. While *Albacore* was being refitted at that port, Lt. Comdr. Oscar E. Hagberg relieved Lt. Comdr. Lake in command of the submarine.

On 16 June, *Albacore* was underway for her fifth patrol and waters surrounding the Bismarck and Solomon Islands. During this patrol, she sighted three separate convoys and attacked two. *Albacore* claimed to have damaged a transport on 19 July, but the submarine failed to sink any vessels. *Albacore* arrived back at Brisbane and began a refit alongside *Fulton* (AS-11).

On 23 August, *Albacore* left to patrol roughly the same area as on her previous assignment. She spotted a Japanese submarine on 31 August but was unable to press home an attack. On 4 September, she encountered a two-ship convoy protected by two escorts and sank one of the ships, *Heijo Maru*, with three torpedo hits made shortly after the initial contact. The submarine then pursued the other vessel for the next two days but was able only to inflict minor hull damage on her target. She terminated her patrol at Brisbane on 26 September.

Albacore's seventh patrol began on 12 October. She fired six torpedoes at a large merchant ship on 25 October but recorded no hits. On 6 November, she received a report of a convoy, which had been spotted by *Steelhead* (SS-280), and began to search for it. On the 8th, the submarine found the convoy and started to track it. However, a plane from the 5th Air Force bombed her and caused her to lose contact with the Japanese ships. The submarine sustained no damage from this attack. *Albacore* was again bombed by an American aircraft on 10 November. This time, the submarine suffered considerable damage. All auxiliary power was knocked out, and the submarine was plunged into total darkness. The main induction valve went under before it was shut and began filling up with water. *Albacore* plunged to a depth of 450 feet before her dive was checked. For the next two and one-half hours, she bounced between 30 feet and 400 feet while at various attitudes. She finally managed to return to the surface with her trim almost restored. The submarine resubmerged, and it was decided to continue the patrol while simultaneously making necessary repairs.

Following this ordeal, *Albacore* received orders to locate and attack the light cruiser *Agano*, which had been hit and damaged by *Scamp* (SS-277). *Albacore* found *Agano* on 12 November and tried to attack, but Japanese destroyers held the submarine down with a four-hour depth charge barrage. On her return to Brisbane on 5 December, Lt. Comdr. James W. Blanchard relieved Hagberg of command.

Albacore departed Australia on the day after Christmas 1943 to patrol north of the Bismarcks. She spotted her first target on 12 January 1944 and sank cargo vessel *Choko Maru* with two separate torpedo attacks. Two days later, she blew up the destroyer *Sazanami* with four shots from her stern tubes. Following more than a fortnight of uneventful patrolling, the submarine headed home. She made brief fuel stops at Tulagi and Midway before reaching Pearl Harbor on 22 February. After three days of voyage repairs, *Albacore* continued on to the Mare Island Navy Yard, Vallejo, Calif., for overhaul.

Albacore left Mare Island on 5 May and held training exercises with *Shad* (SS-235) en route to Hawaii. The submarine reached Pearl Harbor on 13 May and spent the next two weeks on final repairs and training. *Albacore* began her ninth patrol on 29 May and was assigned waters west of the Marianas and around

the Palaus. During the next few days, she made only one contact, a Japanese convoy which she encountered on 11 June. However, before the submarine could maneuver into attack position, a Japanese aircraft forced her to dive and lose contact.

On the morning of the 18th—two days after American forces began landing on Saipan—*Albacore* shifted from her position west of the Marianas to a new location 100 miles further south. Admiral Nimitz had ordered this move in the hope of enabling the submarine to intercept a Japanese task force under Admiral Ozawa reportedly steaming from Tawi Tawi toward Saipan. At about 0800 the next morning, 19 June, *Albacore* raised her periscope and found herself in the midst of Ozawa's main carrier group. Blanchard allowed one Japanese carrier to pass unharmed and selected a second one for his target. He fired six bow tubes. Three Japanese destroyers immediately charged *Albacore*. While the submarine was diving to escape, her crew heard one solid torpedo explosion. About that same time, 25 depth charges began raining down on the submarine. Then Blanchard heard "a distant and persistent explosion of great force" followed by another.

One of the torpedoes had hit Ozawa's flagship, the 31,000-ton carrier *Taiho*—the newest and largest floating air base in the Japanese fleet. The explosion jammed the enemy ship's forward aircraft elevator, and filled its pit with gasoline, water, and aviation fuel. However, no fire erupted, and the flight deck was unharmed. Ozawa was unconcerned by the hit and launched two more waves of aircraft. Meanwhile, a novice took over the damage control responsibilities. He believed that the best way to handle gasoline fumes was to open up the ship's ventilation system and let them disperse throughout the ship. This action turned the ship into a floating time bomb. At 1330, a tremendous explosion jolted *Taiho* and blew out the sides of the carrier. *Taiho* began to settle in the water and was clearly doomed. Although Admiral Ozawa wanted to go down with the ship, his staff persuaded him to transfer to the cruiser *Haguro*. After Ozawa left, *Taiho* was torn by a second explosion and sank stern first, carrying down 1,650 officers and men.

No one on *Albacore* thought *Taiho* had sunk. Blanchard was angry for "missing a golden opportunity." After this action, *Albacore* was assigned lifeguard duty for planes striking Yap and Ulithi. On 2 July, *Albacore* shifted over to intercept traffic between Yap and the Palaus. The submarine spotted a wooden, inter-island steamer loaded with Japanese civilians. Blanchard decided to stage a surface gun attack. After insuring the ship was afire, *Albacore* dived to avoid an airplane. The submarine surfaced soon thereafter and picked up five survivors.

Albacore put in to Majuro on 15 July. She was praised for an aggressive patrol and received credit for damaging a *Shokaku*-class carrier. American codebreakers lost track of *Taiho* after the Battle of the Philippine Sea and, while puzzled, did not realize that she had gone down. "Months and months went by," Blanchard recalled. "Then they picked up a POW someplace who said *Taiho* went down in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Even then, intelligence was doubtful. So I said, 'Keep him alive until he convinces them.'" After confirmation finally had been obtained, Blanchard was awarded a Navy Cross.

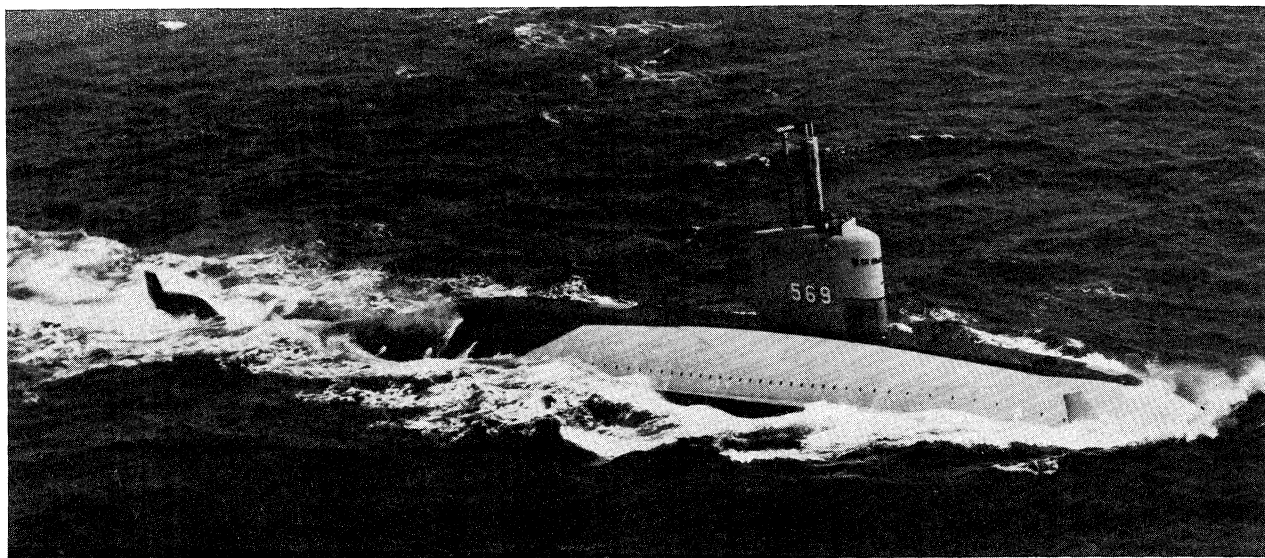
After a refit alongside *Bushnell* (AS-15), the submarine began her 10th patrol on 8 August. Her assignment was the Bungo Suido-Kii Suido area; and, during this period, *Albacore* was credited with sinking two Japanese vessels, a cargo ship and a submarine chaser. The patrol ended at Pearl Harbor on 25 September.

Albacore left Pearl Harbor on 24 October, topped off her fuel tanks at Midway on 28 October, and was never heard from again. According to Japanese records captured after the war, a submarine assumed to be *Albacore* struck a mine very close to the shore off northeastern Hokkaido on 7 November. A Japanese patrol boat witnessed the explosion of a submerged submarine and saw a great deal of heavy oil, cork, bedding, and food supplies rise to the surface. On 21 December, *Albacore* was assumed to have been lost. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 30 March 1945.

Albacore won the Presidential Unit Citation for her second, third, eighth, and ninth patrols and nine battle stars for her service during World War II.

III

(AGSS-569: dp. 1,242 (surf.), 1,837 (subm.); l. 203'10"; b. 27'4"; dr. 18'7"; s. 25 k. (surf.), 20+ k. (subm.); cpl. 36; a. none; cl. *Albacore*)



Albacore (SS-569) off the Isle of Shoals, 5 April 1954. Note her color scheme, more often seen in surface ships, and shaded number on her sail. (80-G-636615)

The third *Albacore* (AGSS-569) was laid down by the Portsmouth (N.H.) Naval Shipyard on 15 March 1952; launched on 1 August 1953; sponsored by Mrs. J. E. Jowers, the widow of Chief Motor Machinist's Mate Arthur L. Stanton, lost with the second *Albacore* (SS-218); and commissioned on 6 December 1953, Lt. Comdr. Kenneth C. Gummerson in command.

The effectiveness of submarines in World War II convinced the Navy that undersea warfare would play an even more important role in coming conflicts and dictated development of superior submarines. The effectiveness of submarines in World War II convinced the Navy that undersea warfare would play an even more important role in coming conflicts and dictated development of superior submarines. The advent of nuclear power nourished the hope that such warships could be produced. The effort to achieve this goal involved the development of a nuclear propulsion system and the design of a streamlined submarine hull capable of optimum submerged performance.

Late in World War II a committee studied postwar uses of atomic energy and recommended the development of nuclear propulsion for ships.

Since nuclear power plants would operate without the oxygen supply needed by conventional machinery, and since techniques were available for converting carbon dioxide back to oxygen, the Navy's submarine designers turned their attention to vessels which could operate for long periods without breaking the surface. Veteran submariners visualized a new type of submarine in which surface performance characteristics would be completely subordinated to high submerged speed and agility. In 1949 a special committee began a series of hydrodynamic studies which led to a program within the Bureau of Ships to determine what hull form would be best for submerged operation. The David Taylor Model Basin tested a series of proposed designs. The best two—one with a single propeller and the other with dual screws—were then tested in a wind tunnel at Langley Air Force Base, Va. The single-screw version was adopted, and construction of an experimental submarine to this design was authorized on 25 November 1950. This ship was classified as an auxiliary submarine (AGSS-569) and named *Albacore*.

The submarine departed Portsmouth on 12 October 1955 and sailed via Block Island, R.I., for Key West where she arrived on 19 October to commence antisubmarine warfare evaluation and to provide target services to the Operational Development Force's Surface Antisubmarine Development Detachment. On 4 November, Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, Chief of Naval Operations, embarked in *Albacore* for a brief demonstration cruise. On 19 November 1955, *Albacore* sailed for a rendezvous point off the Bahama Islands where she conducted special operations until 24 November and then returned to Portsmouth.

From December 1955 to March 1956, *Albacore* underwent stern renewal. Until this time, her propeller had been surrounded by the rudder and stern plane control surfaces. With her "new look," she resembled a blimp, with her propeller aft of all control surfaces.

Operation with her new stern configuration started in April 1956 and continued until late in the year. In May *Albacore* visited New York City and participated in the television production "Wide, Wide World," during which she submerged, with an underwater camera mounted on her forecastle, first live telecast of a submarine while diving.

Following preliminary acceptance trials, the new submarine departed Portsmouth on 8 April 1954 for shakedown training. She began the first cycle of a career in which she experimented extensively with a given configuration and then returned to Portsmouth for extensive modifications so that she might evaluate different design concepts. In this way, she helped the Navy to develop better hull configurations for future submarine classes. On this initial cruise, she operated out of New London before sailing for Key West, Fla., to conduct operations out of that port and in Cuban waters. She returned to Portsmouth on 3 July for more than a year of trials in cooperation with the David Taylor Model Basin. Throughout these operations, she underwent repairs and modification in an effort to eliminate technical problems.

In November 1956, *Albacore* reentered the shipyard for engine conversion. She departed New London, 11 March 1957, for operations out of San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The submarine returned to Boston on 2 April 1957 and operated locally out of Boston and Portsmouth until entering the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard early in 1958 for an overhaul which lasted until June.

The ensuing tests emphasized sound reduction and included extensive evaluation of Aquaplas, a sound dampening plastic which had been applied to the ship's superstructure and tank interiors. In October 1958, her bow planes were removed to cut down still more on noise. The submarine ended the year with a fortnight's run to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and back to serve as a target ship for Canadian warships.

In 1959, a newly designed 14-foot propeller was installed and tested. *Albacore* sailed south late in May and, after operating in the British West Indies for two weeks, proceeded to Key West to serve as a target for the Surface Antisubmarine Development Detachment. After returning north, she spent much of the remainder of 1959 and most of 1960 undergoing widely varied tests for the David Taylor Model Basin. One of the more unusual consisted of evaluating a concave bow sonar dome.

On 21 November 1960, the ship entered the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for a major overhaul and conversion in which she